

also the only non-Native American on the basketball team in my little hometown of Bennington, Oklahoma, which was one of the early-time headquarters of Native Americans and one of the largest populations of Native Americans of Choctaw background.

In my immediate family, I spent probably more time with the Native American families, spending nights there and spending many days working in their culture and understanding the culture of the Native Americans in my district.

But we have longed for the time, I think, where we should hold up and honor the Native Americans for their tremendous sacrifice, for their tremendous contributions, not only to our State of Oklahoma, but to this Nation and to really our freedoms that we enjoy today. Probably there is no one any more American that feels the patriotism of being American than our Native American brothers and sisters.

So, for this particular legislation to come forth concerning this Native American museum, to hold this up, I want to commend my good friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. CARSON) for his efforts. I am sincere about that, what the gentleman is doing along these lines.

So without anything else, I would like to say I appreciate the time of the chairman. I know, Mr. Chairman, in Colorado you have a lot of Native Americans in your fine State also.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2742. This legislation will authorize a grant for the development and construction of a Native American Cultural Center and Museum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma, Brad Carson, for his work on behalf of Native Americans and also for offering this legislation that I am proud to co-sponsor.

Oklahoma has one of the largest American Indian populations of any state. Currently, Oklahoma is home to 39 recognized Indian Tribes. We are very proud in Oklahoma of our Native American heritage. In fact, Oklahoma means "red man." I know from my personal experience Native Americans in my area of Oklahoma make a major contribution to the state.

In 1994, the Oklahoma Legislature created the Native American Cultural and Educational Authority (NACEA) "to promote the history and culture of Native Americans for the mutual benefit of the state of Oklahoma and its American Indian and non-Indian citizens." That legislation authorized the NACEA to construct and operate a Cultural Center and Museum on a chosen site in Oklahoma City. I know the Center will promote the proud history and culture of Oklahoma Native Americans.

I want to again thank my colleague for his tremendous work and role in bringing this legislation to the floor and urge passage of this important bill.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I might add, Native Americans are well protected by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WAT-

KINS) in Oklahoma as well. He watches out for all of them.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for favorable consideration of the bill.

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today encouraged by the congressional support for the Native American Cultural Center and Museum to be built in Oklahoma City. Oklahoma, which boasts the highest Native American population in this country, has long needed a starting point from which to guide interested persons through our rich history. I believe that travelers passing through Oklahoma's crossroads will now encounter a facility so reflective of our State heritage, that their curiosity will be piqued. It is my hope that education and healing will occur as the pains and triumphs of our people are experienced on the grounds of this meeting place.

The Center's central location will not only benefit the heart of our people, but will also spur on the Oklahoma economy by providing new opportunities for Native American entrepreneurs and other local businesses. Furthermore, travelers will have a great place to begin their study of the intriguing native people who have ancestral roots throughout our nation. I believe in this way, visitors will experience the true Native America.

It is always wise to build upon existing strengths. It is obvious that Oklahoma's strength lies in the incredible people who have shaped its history. I look forward to the new strengths to be revealed through the creation of this native American center.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, as Co-Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2742, a bill that authorizes the Secretary of Interior to award financial assistance grants and technical assistance grants to the Native American cultural and educational authority for the construction of a Native American cultural center and museum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The bill authorizes a Federal appropriation of \$33 million over a period of four fiscal years beginning in 2003. The Federal appropriation, however, is contingent upon private, city and State sources accounting for 66 percent of the total cost of the project.

Mr. Speaker, support for a Native American Cultural Center and Museum in a state that has one of the largest Native American population of any state is long overdue. This bill has the bipartisan support of the Congressional Native American Caucus, the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation and the State's elected officials too.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate our colleague, BRAD CARSON of Oklahoma, for all his hard work and sponsorship of H.R. 2741.

Promised as the original Indian Territory, the State of Oklahoma has clearly been enriched through its Indian heritage from the Trail of Tears which moved eastern Indian tribes into the state, through the settlements of the Oklahoma Sooners, to the 39 tribes living within its border today.

It is truly a story worth telling and I look forward to one day visiting the Native American Cultural Center and Museum we are authorizing today.

Mr. CARSON of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2742, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the 3 bills just considered, H.R. 38, H.R. 1576 and H.R. 2742.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

#### BASIC PILOT EXTENSION ACT OF 2001

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3030) to extend the "Basic Pilot" employment verification system, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3030

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Basic Pilot Extension Act of 2001".

#### SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF PROGRAMS.

Section 401(b) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended by striking "4-year period" and inserting "6-year period".

#### SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendment made by this Act shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3030.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 made it unlawful for employers to knowingly hire or employ aliens not eligible to work and required employers to check the identity and work eligibility documents of all new employees. Under this Act, if the documents provided by an employee reasonably appear on their face to be genuine, the employer has met its document review obligations.

The easy availability of counterfeit documents has made a mockery of the Immigration Reform and Control Act.

□ 2145

Fake documents are produced by the millions and can be obtained cheaply.

Congress responded to this dilemma in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 by instituting employment eligibility confirmation pilot programs for volunteer employers that were to last for 4 years.

Under the basic pilot, the Social Security numbers and alien identification numbers of new hires are checked against Social Security Administration and Immigration and Naturalization Service records in order to weed out documents containing counterfeit numbers and real numbers used by multiple individuals. Operation of the pilot program commenced in November of 1997 and expires this month.

The 1996 Act required that the INS provide a report to Congress on the operation of the pilot programs within 3 months after the end of the third and fourth year in which the programs are in effect. The reports were to, one, assess the benefits of the pilot programs to employers and the degree to which they assist in the enforcement of the rules regarding the employment of aliens; and, two, to include recommendations on whether or not the pilot program should be continued or modified.

The INS has not complied. That is no surprise. The agency provided Congress with no report after the third year of operation of the basic pilot program, despite being mandated to do so by law, and there is no assurance that one will be provided within the time limits specified by law after the fourth year of operation. The INS' failure to obey the law and to provide the reports as required by law is unfortunately a frequent failing of this agency. It can only be hoped that once the immigration functions of the Justice Department are restructured and the INS is abolished will such negligence and/or malfeasance be a thing of the past.

In any event, Congress must now decide upon the reauthorization of the

basic pilot program in the absence of the agency reports, required by law, on the program. We have received word from industry implementing the basic pilot program that it has been a great success and that industry representatives favor a 2-year extension of the program.

The committee has received no adverse comment regarding the basic pilot program. In light of the continuing relevance of the original goals of the basic pilot program, and the evidence of its successful operation, we all should support a 2-year extension. H.R. 3030, introduced by our colleague, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LATHAM), provides that extension.

I can only hope that when we are again called upon to consider the merits of this pilot program we will have in hand an evaluation of the program's operation from the Justice Department. The INS is supposed to enforce the law. The Justice Department is the agency in the executive branch to ensure that the law is being enforced; and unfortunately, the law is not being complied with, and the reports we asked for in 1996 by law have not been submitted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3030; and let me say that I hope at the end of 2 years the immigration service will read laws passed by Congress and signed by the President so that once again the Congress is not put in this embarrassing situation of legislating without required reports.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise with great enthusiasm on supporting the extension with respect to H.R. 3030, a bill to extend the basic pilot employment verification system. I would imagine if we were to take a survey of all of the legal immigrants in the United States, we would find a minuscule proportion engaged in any illegal and/or terroristic activities. However, since September 11, a new page has been turned as relates to immigration laws and those who are immigrants.

Congress created the program that we speak of tonight as part of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996 to help employers comply with laws that bar them from knowingly hiring ineligible workers. I would venture to say that most Americans would agree that it is important to assure that as employers are hiring, that they have the necessary information to hire those who are here in the United States legally.

At the same time, I believe that under the leadership of our new Commissioner Ziglar that we will also begin to be able to confront issues of terrorism and those who would pro-

mote it, would come into this country illegally, and separate that from the necessity of improving our immigration laws overall and addressing those individuals that want to access immigration legally with dignity.

I am supporting this legislation, but I hope as well this House and the other body will be able to move forward to address a number of issues that have been put on the table. As a co-chair of the Democratic Task Force on Immigration, I hope we will be able to look at the issue of family reunification, earned access to legalization, increase our review of border safety and protection, look at the enhanced temporary worker program; and yes, I think it is important to end unfair discrimination against legal immigrants.

As my colleagues know, in this instance, this particular pilot bill, the Congress is exploring new ways and methods and techniques to assure the security and integrity of the way in which we admit and track aliens who apply for nonimmigrant visas. We do live in dangerous times, as I have already noted.

This bill is extending a pilot program that will improve and ensure integrity in the employment verification process. I believe that this is a process that no one disagrees with. Those who want to access legalization, those who want to support family reunification, and certainly those legal immigrants who are seeking employment, they have their documentation and they have no problem with the employers verifying that documentation.

This bill introduced by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LATHAM) extends the basic pilot employment verification point under expedited procedures. The basic employment verification system is a program that many companies use to ensure that new companies are legal. This program is a voluntary electronic employment verification system which allows employers to verify I-9 documents. Companies with facilities in any of the pilot States may use the verification program throughout all of their facilities, including States outside the program. That is a very important aspect of this particular legislation.

Approximately 2,000 employers are presently using the basic pilot program, which creates a very valid data processing system that allows accuracy in access to determine if the individual that they want to hire, the person that is presenting themselves as a legal immigrant, has the documentation and does have the required legal documentation.

In title IV of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, Congress authorized the Immigration and Naturalization Service to conduct voluntary pilot programs that allow these participating



employers to access by computer certain governmental databases for purposes of new employment verification. This program allows employers signing a memorandum of understanding with the INS to query an INS Social Security Administration database regarding the work authorization status of a new employment applicant instead of simply recording and retaining the number of documents that such applicants choose to submit.

The basic pilot program provides greater ease of verification for employers and employees and greater deterrence of the use of fraudulent INS and SSA documents. We need a system like this system-wide in the INS in order to be able to address the differentiation between those who want to access legalization rightly and those who want to be in this country illegally.

Industries, such as meat packing and food processing, have stated an interest in cooperating with the INS to maximize its ability to assure its interests in cooperating with the INS in order to make sure that their workforce is authorized. Many believe that while the program does not provide 100 percent deterrence of persons seeking unauthorized employment, it is far superior to the current practice of recording I-9 forms, the number of documents physically presented by new employees.

This gives something for the employers to rely upon. This puts the onus and responsibility on the INS to have a database on which they can rely. This moves immigration into the 21st century.

I support this legislation because it is needed, because section 401(b) of the 1996 Act states that the Attorney General shall terminate the pilot program at the end of the 4-year period beginning on the first day the pilot program is in effect. H.R. 3030 extends the life of the program by 2 years, from 4 years to 6 years, giving us, as the chairman indicated, additional data so that we can again respond to those who wish to access legalization and as well maintain legal documentation and be in this country as we would want them to be in a country that believes in the diversity as well as the responsibility of those who seek access to legalization in treating them fairly.

This pilot program enhances the current I-9 form employment verification process by providing employers with greater assurances that they are not hiring unauthorized aliens and by establishing larger obstacles to aliens seeking to work illegally, but thereby rewarding those who seek to access the right documentation and to follow the laws of this Nation.

Again, I hope that we will support this legislation. We are a country of immigrants and a country of laws.

Mr. Speaker. I am gratified to be here today to vote on a bill that will improve the employ-

ment verification process. As you know, the Congress is exploring new ways, methods, and techniques to ensure the security and integrity of the way in which we admit and track aliens who apply for non-immigrant visas. We do live in dangerous times. This bill is extending a pilot program that would improve and ensure integrity in the employment verification process.

This bill, introduced by Congressman TOM LATHAM, extends the Basic Pilot employment verification program under expedited procedures. The Basic employment verification system is a program that many companies use to ensure that new companies are legal. This program is a voluntary electronic employment verification system, which allow employers to verify I-9 documents. Companies with facilities in any of the "pilot" states may use the verification program throughout all of their facilities, including states outside the program. Approximately 2,000 employers are presently using the Basic Pilot Program.

In Title IV of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, Congress authorized the Immigration and Naturalization Service to conduct voluntary pilot programs that allow these participating employers to access by computer certain governmental databases for purposes of new employment verification. This program allows employers signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the INS to query an INS-Social Security Administration (SSA) data base regarding the work-authorization status of new employment applicants, instead of simply recording and retaining the numbers of documents that such applicants chose to submit. The Basic Pilot Program provides greater ease of verification for employers and employees and greater deterrence of the use of fraudulent INS and SSA documents.

Industries such as meat packing and food processing have stated an interest in cooperating with the INS to maximize its ability to ensure its interest in cooperating with the INS to maximize its ability to ensure its workforce is authorized. Many believe that while the program does not provide 100 percent deterrence of persons seeking unauthorized employment, it is far superior to the current practice of recording in I-9 forms the numbers of documents physically presented by new employees.

I support this legislation because it is needed because Section 401(b) of the 1996 Act states that "the . . . Attorney General shall terminate a pilot program at the end of the 4-year period beginning on the first day the pilot program is in effect." H.R. 3030 extends the life of the program by two years, from four years to six years. This pilot program enhances the current I-9 form employment verification process by providing employers with greater assurances that they are not hiring unauthorized aliens and by establishing larger obstacles to aliens seeking to work illegally. I support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to yield back if the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) does the same.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just conclude by simply adding that I hope as we pass this legislation we will be able to as well bring to finalization 245(I) that helps with family unification; that we will realize that immigration issues are separated from those who would promote and do harm to the United States versus those who are hungry to be in a country that provides opportunity and democracy.

I would hope that we would look to the issues of earned access to legalization as we look to border safety and protection, work of the enhanced temporary worker program and continue to work against unfair discrimination against legal immigrants as we look to put this country on sure footing, fighting the terrible terrorists, but as well recognizing the value of immigrants who have come to this country and contributed with hard work and sincere commitment to our values and our principles.

I ask that my colleagues support H.R. 3030.

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commend the judiciary committee on a job well done and ask for the expedient passage of H.R. 3030, a bill to extend the basic pilot employment verification program. This bill will reauthorize the recently expired program for an additional two years at minimal cost to the government.

H.R. 3030 will further the aims of this body by encouraging greater cooperation between industry and the federal government—something I believe my colleagues on both sides of the aisle can support.

This program, originally the brain-child of my good friend Representative KEN CALVERT, allows eligible employers to use a joint Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)—Social Security Administration (SSA) database to verify that prospective employees are employable under existing law. Furthermore, it has the desirable effect of providing greater ease of verification for employers and greater deterrence to those who would fraudulently use legal documents.

Currently used by approximately 1,758 companies in the states of California, Florida, Illinois, Nebraska, New York, and Texas, as well as facilities owned by these companies in states not explicitly covered, this program has been beneficial to industries ranging from meat packing to direct mail.

As we continue to debate INS reform, I believe it is incumbent upon us that we reauthorize programs that have been successful and recognize these programs as the model for such future efforts.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I stand today in strong support of this important legislation. In 1994, during my first term in Congress I introduced a bill to create a system now known as the Basic Pilot Program. Representing a district very close to the U.S./Mexico border, I heard from many INS agents dissatisfied with the tools they were given to track illegal immigrants and from employers who wanted a way to verify the employment eligibility of prospective employees. As we discussed the means

to develop such a system, one idea that kept cropping up was a simple 1-800 telephone number that businesses could use to verify the Social Security numbers of people they had hired.

In 1996, I was successful in getting the Basic Pilot Program included in the Immigration Reform Act and I am pleased that companies across the country are now using the toll free verification line. I applaud my friend from Iowa for moving to extend the program. Now, more than ever, it is clear that we need to provide tools that will help the INS track people in this country illegally.

Even while this program continues, we will be working together to ensure that the INS meets the requirements of the 1996 law. I have asked INS to complete their report on the Basic Pilot Program and will work with the Service, the gentleman from Iowa and the Chairman of the Committee on ways to improve and expand the program to all fifty states.

Again, I would like to thank the gentleman from Iowa for introducing this key legislation and would urge all my colleagues to vote for its passage.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I also yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3030, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to extend the basic pilot program for employment eligibility verification, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ANTI-HOAX TERRORISM ACT OF 2001

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3209) to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to false communications about certain criminal violations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3209

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

*This Act may be cited as the "Anti-Hoax Terrorism Act of 2001".*

#### SEC. 2. HOAXES AND RECOVERY COSTS.

(a) PROHIBITION ON HOAXES.—Chapter 47 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1036 the following:

##### "§ 1037. False information and hoaxes

"(a) CRIMINAL VIOLATION.—Whoever engages in any conduct, with intent to convey false or

misleading information, under circumstances where such information may reasonably be believed and where such information concerns an activity which would constitute a violation of section 175, 229, 831, or 2332a, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

"(b) CIVIL ACTION.—Whoever engages in any conduct, with intent to convey false or misleading information, under circumstances where such information concerns an activity which would constitute a violation of section 175, 229, 831, or 2332a, is liable in a civil action to any party incurring expenses incident to any emergency or investigative response to that conduct, for those expenses.

"(c) REIMBURSEMENT.—The court, in imposing a sentence on a defendant who has been convicted of an offense under subsection (a), shall order the defendant to reimburse any party incurring expenses incident to any emergency or investigative response to that conduct, for those expenses. A person ordered to make reimbursement under this subsection shall be jointly and severally liable for such expenses with each other person, if any, who is ordered to make reimbursement under this subsection for the same expenses. An order of reimbursement under this subsection shall, for the purposes of enforcement, be treated as a civil judgment."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 47 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding after the item for section 1036 the following:

"1037. False information and hoaxes."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3209, the bill presently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

□ 2200

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3209 would impose civil and criminal penalties to deter and punish a person or persons for perpetrating a hoax that others could reasonably believe is or may be a biological, chemical, nuclear attack, or an attack using some other type of weapon of mass destruction.

Mr. Speaker, today is a very important day to this Nation in many respects. It has been 3 months since New York and the Pentagon were turned into Ground Zero and our national innocence was shattered. Since that time, anthrax and the U.S. mail have become synonymous; monthly Federal warnings about new terrorist attacks have become expected; and a heightened level of alertness on the part of

the American people has become necessary.

In the wake of September 11, 2001, and the anthrax attacks, the news media has graphically described the likely devastation caused by chemical, biological, or nuclear attacks on our citizens and on our country. America is in a state of high alert, and this has brought both apprehension and new responsibility.

Due to these concerns, Americans are responsibly reporting suspicious behavior and events to the authorities. This is necessary to protect our country and our freedoms. Unfortunately, while our emergency responders and law enforcement are stretched to the limits responding to real threats, they have had to respond to an increased number of hoaxes. These hoaxes are not meant to be funny; rather, they are meant to terrorize and to frighten.

These hoaxes distract Federal, State, and local law enforcement, criminal investigators, and emergency responders from real crises and real threats. As a result, they place both the public and our national security at risk.

Amazingly, the criminal code does not always cover such crimes. While under current law it is a felony to commit a hoax with regard to tampered food products, it is not necessarily a felony to commit a hoax that scares the public into believing that they have been exposed to a deadly disease such as anthrax, a disease that has been militarized and used to kill innocent Americans since September 11.

H.R. 3209, the Anti-hoax Terrorism Act of 2001, closes the existing gap. This is important and necessary legislation, as it will make it a felony to perpetrate a hoax related to biological, chemical, nuclear, and weapons of mass destruction attacks. The person or persons committing such a hoax will be subject to civil and criminal penalties and responsible for reimbursement of any emergency or investigative expense due to the hoax.

The Department of Justice and the FBI have testified before the Subcommittee on Crime and made it clear that these types of hoaxes threaten the health and safety of the American public and our national security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Chairman SENSENBRENNER) for his leadership on this issue, and I would also like to extend my appreciation to the chairman of the Subcommittee on Crime, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), for introducing this bill and for all of his leadership on this issue.

I am proud to serve as a member of the Subcommittee on Crime where the bill was first heard, and also to be a cosponsor of H.R. 3209.